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Lovelorn

STIRRING STORIES OF REAL ROMANCE

10¢

52
PAGES

THE GIRL I LOVE...
AND SHE'S PROMISED
TO WAIT FOR HIM
FOREVER! I WONDER...CAN
A GIRL'S LIFE HOLD JUST ONE
GREAT ROMANCE?

Now YOU CAN HAVE
DARING *Newest Look* BEAUTY
WITH ALL-IN-ONE
TRIOLETTE

*It's All
These*

- 1-uplift bra
2-waist nipper
3-garter belt

Put your figure in style! Look feminine, curvaceous—*instantly*—with new marvelous TRIOLETTE. It's taken New York by storm

it's all the rage with smart girls...because it rounds you enticingly in the right places with never a bulge in the wrong ones! Lightly but cleverly boned—to pull in your waist, give fullness to hips, lift bust to alluring firm contours. No matter what shape bosom you have! Magical, you'll agree. . .and this one little garment does it all! In luxury rayon satin—with revealing lace inserts at bust, doainty net edging at top and bottom. Comfortable! Lastex insert, adjustable hook-and-eye back fastening, 4 adjustable garters. Bro straps included, adjustable, easy to attach. New TRIOLETTE casts little more than bro alone! We know you'll be thrilled—your money back if not 100% pleased with your glamorous "New Look"



BE SMARTLY
STRAPLESS OR
WEAR STRAPS
ALSO
INCLUDED

Costs so little

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For That
Thrilling
NEW LOOK

Have Tiny Waist
—Full Bosom
FIGURE

figure. A cup, 32 to 36.
B cup, (larger) 32 to 38.
Blue white or nude.

\$595 • BLUE
• WHITE
• NUDE

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I understand if not delighted with TRIOLETTE I can return in 10 days for full purchase price refund.



THE WAR CHANGED MANY LIVES, READER—PERHAPS MINE WAS NO EXCEPTION! I REMEMBER THE START OF THAT CHANGE—THAT CRAZY, DIZZING NEW YEAR'S EVE IN 1943! JUST A GAL WITH HER DATE—CAPTAIN FRANK VICKERS OF THE U.S. ARMY AIR FORCE—

GOLLY, CLAIRE, TIMES SQUARE'S NO PLACE FOR US IN THIS MOB! I'VE GOT RESERVATIONS AT THE BLUE ROOM—IF WE CAN EVER PUSH OUR WAY THROUGH!

SWELL, FRANK! LET'S SEE YOU TRY OUT THOSE FOOTBALL SHOULDERS OF YOURS!



"LAUGHTER, BRIGHT LIGHTS, DIN AND EXCITEMENT—THEY SENT MY BLOOD RACING! EVEN FRANK ASSUMED A NEW GLAMOR! HE'VE SEEMED MERELY A NICE BOY ON OUR PREVIOUS DATES—BUT TO-NIGHT HE WAS ROMANTIC!"

THAT DANCE... YOU WERE BEAUTIFUL, KID! LET'S GET BACK TO OUR TABLE! THERE'S SOMETHING... I WANT TO SAY!

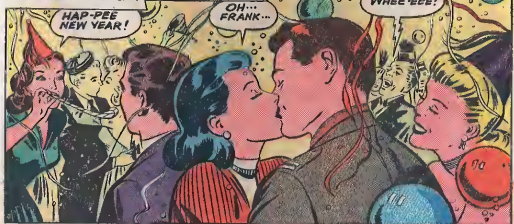
OKAY—IF I CAN MANAGE TO HEAR YOU! I'M HALF DEAF!

BLAT!





"TWELVE O'CLOCK! IT WAS THE NEW YEAR, 1944... USHERING IN A NEW LOVE... A NEW LIFE!"





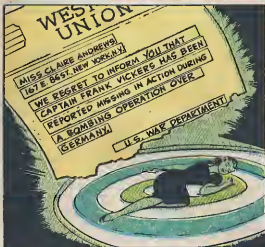
"BUT I HAD MY DREAMS... SWEET DREAMS IN WHICH WE WERE REUNITED ONCE MORE... AND THEY GAVE ME THE STRENGTH TO GO ON!"

DARLING...
DARLING...

"DREAMS, MEMORIES, A PHOTOGRAPH, AN OCCASIONAL LETTER... AND ONE DAY... SOMETHING ELSE!"

MISS CLAIRE ANDREWS? TELEGRAM FOR YOU!

A... TELEGRAM?



"AND THAT WAS THAT, READER! A DREAM FINISHED FOREVER... A SHATTERED HEART! LEFT TO ME ONLY AN EMPTY LIFE... AND THE ASHES OF A DEAD LOVE!"

I'VE GOT TO PULL MYSELF TOGETHER! I'VE GOT TO GO ON... BUT FOR WHAT?

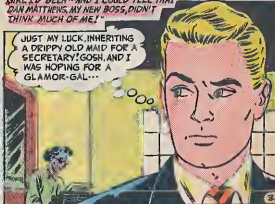
"HAPPY, CAREFREE TIMES WERE A MOCKERY, A RELIC OF THE VANISHED PAST! SO WERE MEN, FOR MY HEART CRIED OUT FOR JUST ONE WHO COULD NEVER COME AGAIN!"



... BUT CLAIRE, WHY NOT COME ALONG? JOE'S FRIEND IS TERRIBLY NICE! I'M SURE YOU...

PLEASE, MARY, I CAN'T! I... I'M NOT INTERESTED IN MEN ANYMORE!

"THAT'S HOW THINGS WERE WHEN I WAS TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER DEPARTMENT! BY THIS TIME I'D LET MYSELF GO, CARED LITTLE FOR MY APPEARANCE! I SCARCELY EVEN RESEMBLED THE GIRL I'D BEEN... AND I COULD TELL THAT DAN MATTHEWS, MY NEW BOSS, DIDN'T THINK MUCH OF ME!"



JUST MY LUCK, INHERITING A DRIPPY OLD MAID FOR A SECRETARY! GOSH, AND I WAS HOPING FOR A GLAMOR-GAL...

"I KNEW WHAT HE THOUGHT I WAS... BUT I DIDN'T CARE MUCH UNTIL ONE NIGHT..."



I KNEW YOU WOULDN'T MIND WORKING OVERTIME, MISS ANDREWS! AFTER ALL, IT ISN'T AS IF YOU EVER HAD ANYTHING ELSE TO DO!

OH...

"I RESTRAINED MY TEARS UNTIL AFTER HE LEFT! THEN..."



IS... IS THIS WHAT I'VE BECOME... JUST A PIECE OF OFFICE FURNITURE?

"THEN, SUDDENLY..."

MISS ANDREWS, I... I'M SORRY! I SAW THE HURT IN YOUR EYES... I HAD TO COME BACK TO APOLOGIZE!

DON'T... DON'T LET IT TROUBLE YOU, MR. MATTHEWS! WHO EVER HEARD OF AN OLD MAID HAVING FEELINGS?

"HE INSISTED ON TAKING ME HOME... AND MORE TO GET RID OF HIM THAN ANYTHING ELSE, I CONSENTED! WHEN WE ARRIVED..."

HMMM... AN ARMY MAN, EH? WHO IS HE... YOUR BROTHER?

NO, HE'S... HE WAS MY FIANCEE! IT MAY BE HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT SOMEONE DID LOVE ME... ONCE!

FORGIVE ME... GUESS I KEEP PUTTING MY FOOT INTO IT, DON'T I? BUT SAY, THIS GIRL... SHE'S GORGEOUS! WHO'S SHE?

WHY, THAT'S... THAT'S... MY SISTER...

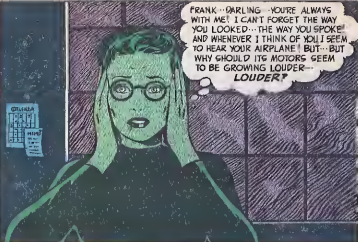


OH... YOUR SISTER, EH? UH-HUH...

OH, WHY HAVEN'T I GOT THE COURAGE TO TELL HIM THE TRUTH... THAT THAT WAS ME... AND THIS IS WHAT I'VE LET MYSELF COME TO!

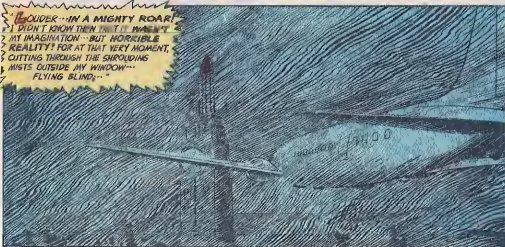


WEARY AND HEARTBREAKING, THE
LONELY DAYS PASSED! I TRIED TO
BURY MYSELF IN MY WORK... BUT
SOMETIMES, I'D BECOME AWARE OF
DAN MATTHEWS LOOKING AT ME
...STRANGELY! BUT EVER PRESENT
WERE MY THOUGHTS OF FRANK,
CROWDING HIM FROM MY MIND!
THEN... ONE FOGGY SATURDAY
MORNING IN AUGUST... IN MY
OFFICE IN THE EMPIRE STATE
BUILDING ...



FRANK... DARLING... YOU'RE ALWAYS
WITH ME! I CAN'T FORGET THE WAY
YOU LOOKED... THE WAY YOU SPOKE!
AND WHENEVER I THINK OF YOU, I SEEM
TO HEAR YOUR AIRPLANE! BUT... BUT
WHY SHOULD ITS MOTORS SEEM
TO BE GROWING LOUDER...
LOUDER?

LOUDER... IN A MIGHTY ROAR!
I DIDN'T KNOW THEN THAT IT WASN'T
MY IMAGINATION... BUT HORRIBLE
REALITY! FOR AT THAT VERY MOMENT,
CUTTING THROUGH THE SHROUDING
MISTS OUTSIDE MY WINDOW...
FLYING BLIND...

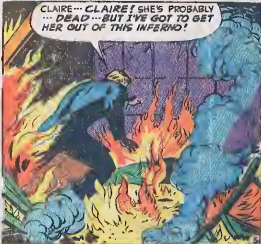


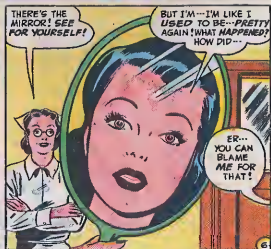
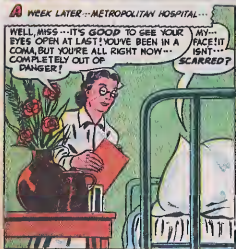
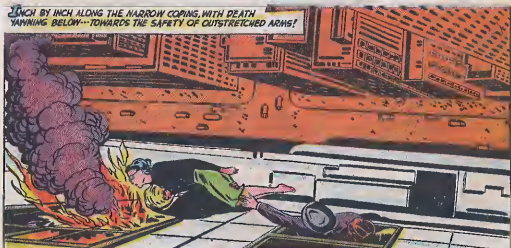
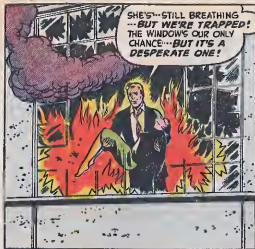
HELP!

CRASH!

E-E-E-K!

CLAIRE... CLARE! SHE'S PROBABLY
... DEAD... BUT I'VE GOT TO GET
HER OUT OF THIS INFERNO!



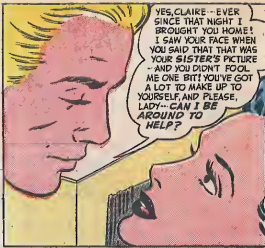


DAN MATTHEWS...AT YOUR SERVICE! YOU SEE, AS SOON AS WE KNEW YOU WERE OKAY I-- I HAD YOU FIXED UP! I WANTED YOU TO COME TO AS THE BEAUTIFUL GIRL YOU REALLY WERE-- AND SHOULD HAVE BEEN ALL ALONG!

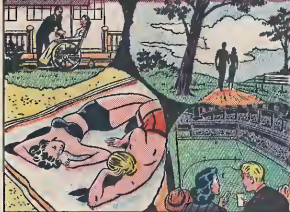
THEN... THEN YOU KNEW?



YES, CLAIRE-- EVER SINCE THAT NIGHT I BROUGHT YOU HOME! I SAW YOUR FACE WHEN YOU SAID THAT THAT WAS YOUR SISTER'S PICTURE-- AND YOU DIDN'T FOOL ME ONE BIT! YOU'VE GOT A LOT TO MAKE UP TO YOURSELF, AND PLEASE, LADY-- CAN I BE AROUND TO HELP?



WELL-- I COULDN'T REFUSE THE MAN WHO SAVED MY LIFE AND, SO, THROUGH THE SLOW DAYS OF CONVALESCENCE, THERE WAS DAN-- ALWAYS DAN--



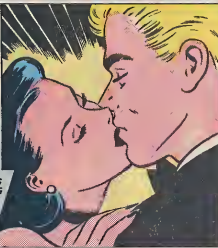
'ALWAYS DAN-- AND A GROWING INTIMACY BROUGHT US CLOSE TOGETHER! BUT I HADN'T REALIZED HOW CLOSE-- UNTIL THAT BITTER-SWEET NIGHT--'

WHAT A MOON-- EH, CLAIRE? I CAN SEE IT IN YOUR EYES-- AND THERE ARE A THOUSAND STARS DANCING THERE!

THAT'S ALMOST POETRY! TELL ME-- DO YOU SEE ANYTHING ELSE?



"HIS DEEPLY-INTAKEN BREATH TOLD ME IT WAS A RASH QUESTION-- BUT IT WAS TOO LATE! WE SWAYED TOWARDS EACH OTHER AS IF BY SOME STRANGE MAGNETISM-- AND THE NEXT SECOND, WE WERE LOST IN EACH OTHER'S ARMS! THIS WAS A RICH, SINGING INTOXICATION SUCH AS I HAD NEVER FELT-- THIS WAS LOVE!"



LIPS PRESSED UPON MINE-- THE STRENGTH OF A MAN'S EMBRACE-- AND SUDDENLY IT HAPPENED! A TORRENT OF MEMORIES ENGULFED ME-- OF OTHER LIPS, OTHER ARMS! I HEARD MY OWN VOICE, AND IT TOLD FRANK, 'I PROMISE TO WAIT FOR YOU FOREVER!'

NO, DAN! LET ME GO!



IM---SORRY, BUT
THIS---**CAN'T BE!**
THERE'S TOO MUCH
THAT'S---GONE
BEFORE---

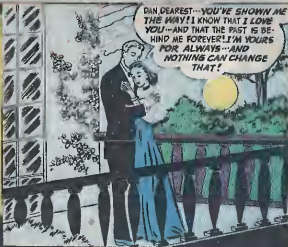
I THINK I UNDERSTAND, CLAIRE! A
SHADOW HAS COME BETWEEN US,
KEEPING US APART! IT'S THE
SHADOW OF A **DEAD MAN**---
FRANK
VICKERS!



OH DARLING, DARLING---YOU'VE GOT TO FACE LIFE
AND BURY THE PAST! YOU CAN'T LIVE WITH JUST
MEMORIES---HE WOULDN'T WANT IT THAT WAY!
HE'D WANT YOU TO SEEK THE HAPPINESS YOU DE-
SERVE---THE NEW LIFE THAT'S WAITING FOR YOU!
AND IF YOU CAN FIND ANY LOVE FOR ME IN YOUR
HEART---**I WON'T TAKE NO FOR AN ANSWER!**



"THE MISTS OF
OLD PAIN AND
GRIEF SEEMED TO
VANISH BEFORE
DAN'S KINDNESS AND
UNDERSTANDING
--AND SUDDENLY
THE FUTURE
SEEMED TO DAWN
CLEAR AND BRIGHT
BEFORE ME!
YESTERDAY DIMMED
WITHIN HIS
EMBRACE--AND A
GLAD TOMORROW
WAITED!"



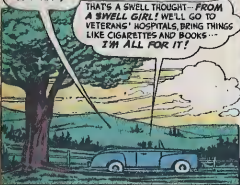
DAN, DEAREST---YOU'VE SHOWN ME
THE WAY! I KNOW THAT I LOVE
YOU---AND THAT THE PAST IS BE-
HIND ME FOREVER! I'M YOURS
FOR ALWAYS---AND
NOTHING CAN CHANGE
THAT!

DAN'S...FOR ALWAYS!
WE SET OUR MARRIAGE
DATE FOR A MONTH--
HENCE---AND NEVER
HAD I BEEN SO DE-
LIRIOUSLY HAPPY! WITH
THE FLEETING WEEKS, I
FOUND FRANK BECOMING
A DIM, SWEET MEMORY--
ALMOST TOO QUICKLY!
PERHAPS MY CONSCIENCE WAS
BOTHERING ME--PERHAPS
THAT'S WHY I NOW MADE A
STRANGE REQUEST--



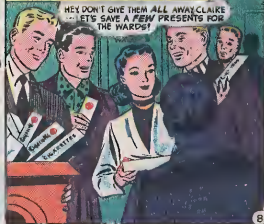
I--I KNOW WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING FOR THOSE
SOLDIERS WHO ARE---GONE---BUT HOW ABOUT
THE **WOUNDED**---LYING IN HOSPITALS AND WAIT-
ING FOR A FRIENDLY HAND? PLEASE, DAN, LET ME
KEEP THEM ALIVE IN MY HEART AS A MONUMENT
TO FRANK!

THAT'S A SWELL THOUGHT--FROM
A **SWELL GIRL!** WE'LL GO TO
VETERANS' HOSPITALS, BRING THINGS
LIKE CIGARETTES AND BOOKS---
I'M ALL FOR IT!



IT WAS AT THE FOURTH HOSPITAL WE VISITED---

HEY DON'T GIVE THEM ALL AWAY, CLAIRE
---LET'S SAVE A FEW PRESENTS FOR
THE WARDS!



THAT MAN... THE ONE IN THE
WHEEL CHAIR... WHAT'S WRONG
WITH HIM, DOCTOR? HE DOESN'T
SEEM VERY INTERESTED IN US!



HE'S A SAD CASE, MISS
ANDREWS... **AMNESIA!**
HE'LL RECOVER PHYSI-
CALLY, ALL RIGHT, BUT AS
FAR AS HIS PAST IS CON-
CERNED HIS MIND'S A
BLANK!

HOW... **TRAGIC!** BUT
ISN'T THERE **SOME**
WAY TO TRACE HIS
IDENTITY? DOCTAGS
... FINGERPRINTS...?



I'M AFRAID NOT... SINCE **BOTH**
WERE BLOWN OFF WHEN HE WAS
FOUND! HE'S DOOMED ALWAYS TO
REMAIN AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER...
UNLESS SOMETHING FROM HIS
PRE-WAR DAYS RECALLS HIS
PAST TO HIM! HE'S BEEN BROOD-
ING LATELY... PERHAPS **YOU**
COULD CHEER HIM UP!



HELLO,
THERE! HOW
ARE WE DO--

HOW... N-NO.
**NO! IT... IT
C-CAN'T
BE!**



YOUR FACE... YOUR
VOICE... IT'S LIKE
OPENING... A WINDOW
IN MY MIND! SOME-
WHERE, SOMETIME
... **I KNEW YOU!**

CLAIRE... **CLAIRE... IT'S
YOU! I REMEMBER
NOW! I REMEMBER!**

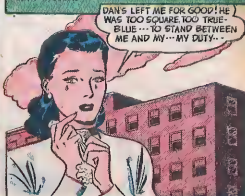
FRANK VICKERS...
**ALIVE! AND CLAIRE'S
TOO FAITHFUL TO...**





GOODBYE...
DARLING...

I LEFT THE HOSPITAL LATER, MY MIND IN A DIZZY WHIRL... THE DEAD RESTORED TO LIFE... MY FIRST LOVE WITH ME... ONLY MORE! THIS WAS WHAT I HAD WANTED, WASN'T IT? THEN WHERE WAS THE GLIMMER I SHOULD HAVE FELT? INSTEAD...

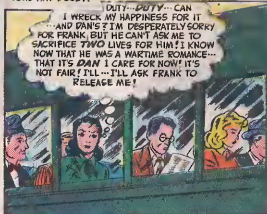


DAN'S LEFT ME FOR GOOD! HE WAS TOO SQUARE, TOO TRUE-BLUE... TO STAND BETWEEN ME AND MY... MY DUTY...

SLEEP CAME SLOWLY THAT NIGHT... BRINGING WITH IT AN APOYING NIGHTMARE OF DOUBT! THE MAN I LOVED... WHO? DAN OR FRANK? FRANK OR DAN?



DURNING AT LAST... AND WITH IT, A FATEFUL DECISION! FOR I HAD PURGED MY HEART IN PAIN... AND KNEW ITS CHOICE BEYOND ANY DOUBT!

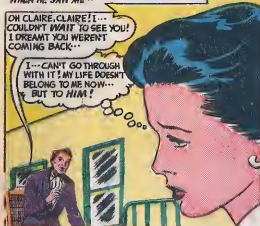


DUTY... DUTY... CAN I WRECK MY HAPPINESS FOR IT... AND DAN'S? I'M DESPERATELY SORRY FOR FRANK, BUT HE CAN'T ASK ME TO SACRIFICE TWO LIVES FOR HIM! I KNOW NOW THAT HE WAS A WARTIME ROMANCE... THAT IT'S DAN I CARE FOR NOW! IT'S NOT FAIR! I'LL... I'LL ASK FRANK TO RELEASE ME!

BUT FRANK WAS PITIFUL IN HIS GRATITUDE WHEN HE SAW ME...

OH CLAIRE, CLAIRE! I... COULDN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU! I DREAMT YOU WEREN'T COMING BACK...

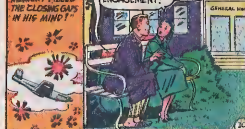
I... CAN'T GO THROUGH WITH IT! MY LIFE DOESN'T BELONG TO ME NOW... BUT TO HIM!

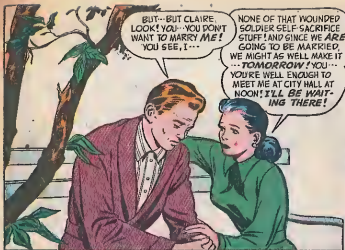


MY DREAMS WERE FOR DAN... BUT MY DAYS WERE FRANK'S! HE MADE MIRACULOUS STRIDES TOWARDS RECOVERY... AND WAS CHILDISHLY PROUD AS HIS FAST-RETURNING MEMORY FILLED THE CLOSING GAPS IN HIS MIND!

I... I CAN REMEMBER MY PLANE CRASHING NOW! AND THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE THAT'S COMING BACK TO ME NOW... SOMETHING BEFORE THAT...

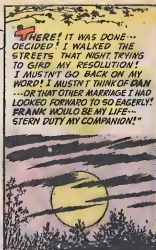
SKIP IT, FRANK... I DON'T WANT YOU AGITATING YOURSELF WITH THOSE HORRIBLE RECOLLECTIONS! YOU'RE NEARLY WELL NOW, SO IT'S TIME WE BEGAN THINKING ABOUT GOING THROUGH WITH OUR ENGAGEMENT!





BUT--BUT CLAIRE, LOOK! YOU--YOU DON'T WANT TO MARRY ME! YOU SEE, I---

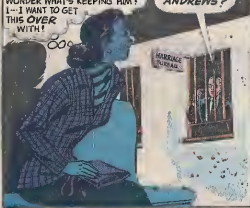
NONE OF THAT WOUNDED SOLDIER SELF-SACRIFICE STUFF! AND SINCE WE ARE GOING TO BE MARRIED, WE MIGHT AS WELL MAKE IT --TOMORROW! YOU--YOU'RE WELL ENOUGH TO MEET ME AT CITY HALL AT NOON! I'LL BE WAITING THERE!



"THERE! IT WAS DONE... DECIDED! I WALKED THE STREETS THAT NIGHT TRYING TO GIRD MY RESOLUTION! I MUSTN'T GO BACK ON MY WORD! I MUSTN'T THINK OF DAN...OR THAT OTHER MARRIAGE I HAD LOOKED FORWARD TO SO EAGERLY! FRANK WOULD BE MY LIFE-- STERN DUTY MY COMPANION!"

"NEXT DAY...AT CITY HALL..."

FRANK'S OVER AN HOUR LATE! I WONDER WHAT'S KEEPING HIM? I--I WANT TO GET THIS OVER WITH!

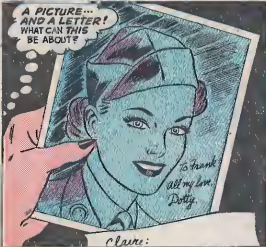


HEY, LADY! --YOUR NAME CLAIRE ANDREWS?



THAT'S RIGHT! WHY, WHAT--

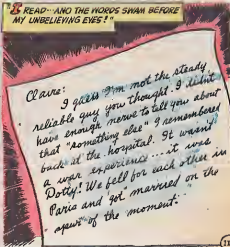
DUNNO, MISS--SOME SOLDIER GAVE ME IT! SAID TO GIVE IT TO YOU!



A PICTURE... AND A LETTER! WHAT CAN THIS BE ABOUT?

To Frank
all my love,
Doty.

Claire:



"I READ--AND THE WORDS SWAM BEFORE MY UNBELIEVING EYES!"

Claire: I guess I'm not the steady, reliable guy you thought. I didn't have enough nerve to tell you about that "something else" I remembered back at the hospital. It wasn't a war experience...it was Doty! We fell for each other in Paris and got married on the spur of the moment.

"...I CRASHED BEFORE I COULD WRITE YOU ABOUT IT--AND WHEN I FINALLY REMEMBERED, I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO TELL YOU--SO I'M OFF TO LET DOTTY KNOW I'M ALIVE. FORGIVE ME---I KNOW YOU LOVED ME! ---FRANK"

FORGIVE HIM
---HE KNOWS I
LOVED HIM!---
BRO-THER!
I ALMOST DO
FOR THAT!
ZOWIE ---
WHERE'S A
TELEPHONE?

SORRY, BUT MR. MATTHEWS LEFT TOWN AN HOUR AGO ON THE CHICAGO LIMITED! HE HEARD YOU WERE GETTING MARRIED TODAY AND SAID HE DIDN'T WANT TO STAY AROUND!

HAHAH... AN HOUR AGO.
EH? WELL, I KNOW WHERE I
CAN BORROW A CAR---A FAST
ONE!

HOURS LATER...AS THE CHICAGO LIMITED THUNDERS WESTWARD...

OH, I SUPPOSE I CAN'T
BLAME HER, THE SELF-SACRIFIC-
ING LITTLE IDIOT, BUT---HEY!
WHAT'S THAT LUNATIC TRYING
TO DO--- COMMIT
SUICIDE?

BUT AS THE "LUNATIC" SMERGES CLOSER...

CLAIRE!
BUT WHAT--
HOW--

NEVER MIND NOW,
YOU DARLING DOPE!
BETTER FRESHEN UP---
BECAUSE I'M JOIN-
ING YOU AT THE
NEXT STOP!

AND NEXT STOP...

HONEY--HONEY---I--
I JUST DON'T UNDER-
STAND! HOW'D SOME-
BODY TELL ME
SOMETHING?

LET'S GAVE EXPLANATIONS
FOR LATER! FOR NOW,
JUST HOLD ME
TIGHT, SWEETHEART
---AND NEVER LET
ME GO!

YESSIR! THIRTY YEARS ON THIS
RAILROAD---AND I STILL THINK
I'VE GOT THE BEST JOB IN
THE COUNTRY!

THE
END

ALL MY LIFE I'D
KNOWN POVERTY-- THE
PRIVATION OF HAND-ME-DOWNS!
I DIDN'T KNOW THAT ONE PRECIOUS
ASSET WAS MINE-- THAT WITHIN
MY BEATING HEART LAY
ALL THE SHINING
WEALTH OF A ---

Rich Little Poor Girl



"I CAN NEVER REMEMBER
HAVING ANYTHING THAT WAS
TRULY MINE! CLOTHES! THEY
CAME RIGHT OFF COUSIN PAMELA'S
BACK-- WHEN SHE WAS THROUGH
WITH THEM! AND HOW SHE
GLORIED IN IT!"

"THROUGHOUT MY SCHOOL YEARS,
IT WAS THE SAME STORY--
PAMELA THROWING UP MY POVERTY
WHenever SHE HAD THE CHANCE!"

"IT WAS IN THAT MOMENT OF
GRIEF AND HURT PRIDE THAT
BILL GREGG FIRST CAME
INTO MY UNHAPPY LIFE!"

NOW THANK
PAMELA FOR
THE LOVELY
DRESS--
DEAR!

THAT'S ALL RIGHT!
I CAN SEE HOW
HAPPY SHE IS!

WHAT'S YOUR
HURRY, ANY? ARE
YOU SURE YOU
WOULDN'T WANT
A SODA? AFTER
ALL -- I'M
BUYING!

HAW-HAW!
THAT'S TELLING
HER!

I SAW WHAT HAPPENED,
KID! CHEER UP-- DOPES
LIKE THOSE AREN'T
WORTH CRYING
ABOUT!

OH--IT'S
NICE OF YOU
TO--



"IT WAS THE FIRST OF MANY GLAO MEETINGS! WITH BILL, MY HEART SEEMED TO BLOOM AGAIN! -- AND PAMELA LOST HER CRUEL MEANING --"

THAT LITTLE MINX -- AND THE BEST-LOOKING BOY IN SCHOOL! NOW'D SHE EVER MANAGE TO LAND HIM?

THEN IT'S A DATE FOR THE SENIOR PROM, AMY?

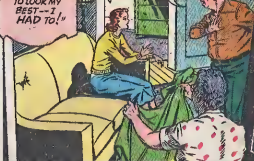
I'LL SAY! I CAN HARDLY WAIT!



"THE SENIOR PROM -- AND A BOY LIKE THAT! IT WAS ECSTASY! I WANTED TO LOOK MY BEST -- I HAD TO!"

PLEASE -- LET ME BUY A PARTY DRESS JUST THIS ONCE!

NO! YOUR MOTHER'S FIXIN' OVER AN OLD ONE OF PAMELA'S -- THAT'LL BE GOOD ENOUGH!



"AND SO ONCE AGAIN IT WAS A HAND-ME-DOWN! BUT IT DIDN'T SEEM TO MATTER AS I FLOATED IN BILL'S STRONG ARMS --"

WHO'S MY SWEETHEART -- SWEETHEART?

I -- I HOPE IT'S ME!

Senior High Senior Prom



"BUT THEN -- SUDDENLY --"

I'M SURPRISED AT YOU, AMY -- NOT LETTING YOUR COUSIN PAMELA HAVE A SINGLE DANCE WITH YOUR NICE ESCORT!

WE CAN FIX THAT SOON ENOUGH! HOW ABOUT THE NEXT ONE?



"I COULD SEE IT HAPPENING -- PAMELA, TURNING ON HER CHARM -- BILL ENTRANCED! MUST SHE HAVE EVERYTHING -- AND I NOTHING?"

OH, DARLING, DARLING -- DON'T LET HER TAKE YOU AWAY FROM ME! PLEASE!



"BUT MY COUSIN HAD WON HER ENTERING WEDGE -- AND MADE SURE TO MONOPOLIZE MUCH OF HIS TIME AS THE DAYS PASSED! WAS I LOSING HIM? BUT THEN CAME GRADUATION, AND THOUGHTS OF THE FUTURE! PERHAPS FOR ONCE MY WEALTHY AUNT COULD REALLY HELP ME!"

DRAMATIC SCHOOL! I CAN'T AFFORD TO SEND BOTH YOU AND PAMELA THERE -- BUT I HAVE MANAGED TO LAND YOU A THEATRICAL POSITION!



YOU'LL SORT OF -- ER -- GET IN ON THE GROUND FLOOR -- AS AN USHERETTE AT THE BIJOU! -- YOU KNOW, DEAR, MANY FAMOUS ACTRESSES STARTED THAT WAY!

YES, I -- I KNOW! THANK YOU, AUNTIE --



"ONCE AGAIN, PAMELA HAD BEATEN ME! SHE'D LEARN THE THINGS I DREAMED OF, WHILE I -- I'D GUIDE PEOPLE TO THEIR SEATS!"

"SO I DOWNED MY DREAMS OF DRAMATICS! STANDING ON YOUR FEET ALL EVENING CAN BE TIRING -- BUT I COULD STILL THINK OF BILL, EVEN IF WORKING NIGHTS PREVENTED ME FROM EVER SEEING HIM!"

"I DID GET TO WATCH THE PICTURES! AND I WAS STRANGELY THRILLED BY EDMOND OLIVER, THE NEW SCREEN SENSATION, WHOSE LATEST PICTURE WAS HELD OVER FOR WEEKS AT THE BRINDU."

"DAY AFTER DAY, HE GAZED FROM THE SILVER SCREEN, SEEMING TO TALK TO ME -- AND BEFORE HIS GLAMOR, POOR PAULINE SEEMED TO RETREAT INTO THE SHADY PAST!"

THERE'LL BE A SHORT WAIT FOR ORCHESTRA SEATS! IMMEDIATE SEATING IN THE MEZZANINE!

HE'S -- WONDERFUL!

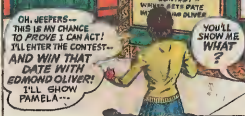


"THERE WERE OTHER PICTURES -- OTHER ACTORS -- BUT I COULDN'T FORGET HIM! THEN THE UNBELIEVABLE HAPPENED! HE WAS COMING -- HERE!"

OH, JEEPEERS -- THIS IS MY CHANCE TO PROVE I CAN ACT! I'LL ENTER THE CONTEST -- AND WIN THAT DATE WITH EDMOND OLIVER! I'LL SHOW PAMELA --

COMING! In Person
Edmond Oliver
GIRLS -- ENTER OUR BIG AMATEUR DRAMATIC CONTEST -- WINNER GETS DATE WITH EDMOND OLIVER

YOU'LL SHOW ME WHAT?



WELL! MY MIDYEAR VACATION FROM DRAMATIC SCHOOL CAME JUST IN TIME -- IN TIME TO PROVE THAT MY TRAINING WILL WIN THAT CONTEST!

YOU'RE WRONG THIS TIME, PAMELA! I'VE GOT MY HEART SET ON COMING IN FIRST -- AND I'LL DO IT!



"I REHEARSED IN SECRET, DETERMINED TO WIN! FINALLY CAME THE NIGHT OF THE CONTEST! HEART THUDDING MADLY, I RUSHED TOWARDS THE THEATRE -- BUT RIGHT OUTSIDE --"

BILL -- I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN WEEKS! HOW SWEET OF YOU -- COMING TO CHEER ME ON --

I'M -- SORRY, AMY, BUT IT'S PAMELA I'M GOING TO BE CHEERING FOR!



"ANOTHER VICTORY FOR PAMELA! HIS WORDS STUNNED ME -- BUT THERE WAS WORSE TO COME!"

WE -- WE'VE BEEN DRIFTING APART! PERHAPS IT'S BEST THAT WAY, AMY -- BEST THAT WE DON'T SEE EACH OTHER ANYMORE!

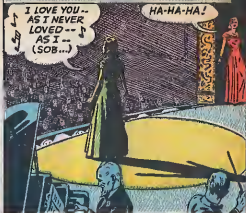
YOU'VE -- FALLEN IN LOVE WITH HER! DON'T BOTHER DENYING IT -- THIS IS GOODBYE!



"THE CONTEST WAS ON -- AND EVEN THROUGH MY BITTER TEARS, I COULD SEE THAT PAMELA WAS SENSATIONAL! WHAT DID IT MATTER, NOW THAT BILL WAS GONE?"



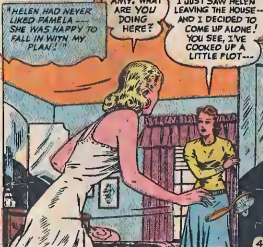
"I KNEW I HAD TO GO THROUGH WITH IT -- HAD TO SING THROUGH A THROAT CHOKED WITH SOBS! IT WAS NO USE --"



TOO BAD, CRY-BABY! I'LL TELL YOU ALL ABOUT MY DATE WITH EDMOND OLIVER!



"YES, PAMELA WON! AND WHEN THE EVENING OF HER BIG DATE CAME--"





--AND IT'S STARTING
RIGHT NOW!

SLAM!

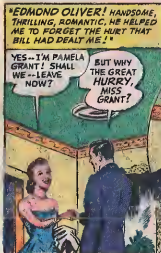
THIS IS AN
OUTRAGE!
OPEN THE
DOOR!

"AND NOW
HELEN RALLIED
AROUND!
A SKILLED
HAIRDRESSER,
SHE WORKED
WONDERS
WITH MY
APPEARANCE--
AND
PAMELA'S
BEST AND
NEWEST
GOWN
DIDN'T
HURT,
EITHER!"



YOU LOOK
BEAUTIFUL!
JUST IN TIME,
TOO -- THERE'S
THE DOORBELL!
BETTER LET HIM
IN, AND BE
CAREFUL! I
HEAR HE'S
THE SMOOTH
TYPE!

DON'T BE SILLY!
I'M SURE HE'S
A PERFECT
GENTLEMAN!



"EDMOND OLIVER! HANDSOME,
THRILLING, ROMANTIC, HE HELPED
ME TO FORGET THE HURT THAT
BILL HAD DEALT ME!"

YES--I'M PAMELA
GRANT! SHALL
WE--LEAVE
NOW?

BUT WHY
THE GREAT
HURRY,
MISS
GRANT?

TRUTHFULLY, MY DEAR, I'D BEEN
EXPECTING SOME FEMALE HORROR--
AND INSTEAD I FIND A VISION OF
LOVELINESS! WHY, I-- SAY,
WHAT'S THAT
NOISE?

THUMP!

IT'S--JUST THE
PLUMBING! ER--
SOME LEAKY DRIP
IS BEING FIXED
UPSTAIRS!
LET'S GO,
HUM!

"THE BLACK CAT CLUB...AND THERE
WAS I, POOR LITTLE AMY GRANT...
TETE-A-TETE WITH HOLLYWOOD'S
MOST HANDSOME HERO! SMALL
WONDER THAT MY HEART BEAT--
BEAT--"

YOU'RE SO
DIFFERENT--SO
GORGEOUS!
AND YOUR HAND
--IT'S SO
SOFT--

PLEASE,
MR. OLIVER--
EDMOND--
YOU MUSTN'T
SAY THINGS
LIKE THAT!

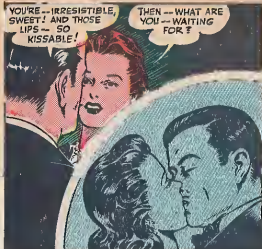


"BUT THEY WERE THE THINGS I WANTED TO HEAR!
HELD CLOSE IN EDMOND'S ARMS, I FELT ALLURING,
SOUGHT AFTER AS NEVER BEFORE--"

YOU MUST HAVE BROKEN A LOT
OF HEARTS IN THIS TOWN--JUST
AS YOU'RE BREAKING MINE! --
SAY, WHY IS THAT OAF IN THE
ORCHESTRA GLARING AT
US THAT WAY?

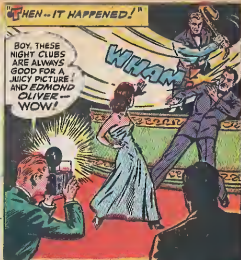


"IT WAS BILL! I'D HEARD HE'D GOTTEN A
JOB AS MUSICIAN, BUT NEVER DREAMED IT
WAS HERE! HE'D TOLD ME WE WERE
THROUGH -- WELL, I'D SHOW HIM THAT
SOMEONE ELSE FOUND ME DESIRABLE!"



YOU'RE -- IRRESISTIBLE, SWEET! AND THOSE LIPS -- SO KISSABLE!

THEN -- WHAT ARE YOU -- WAITING FOR?



THEN -- IT HAPPENED!

BOY, THESE NIGHT CLUBS ARE ALWAYS GOOD FOR A JUICY PICTURE! AND EDMOND OLIVER -- WOW!

WHAM!



THAT SETTLES THIS RUB! LET'S LEAVE AND GO SOMEPLACE WHERE WE CAN BE ALONE!

NO! I WON'T!



SO ALL OF A SUDDEN, YOU DON'T LIKE MY COMPANY! TURNING GOODY-GOOD, EH?

SO HERE YOU ARE -- YOU TREACHEROUS LITTLE SNIP!



IT WAS PAMELA -- AND MY SHAME WAS COMPLETE!

TRIED TO DO ME OUT OF THE DATE I'D WON, DIDN'T YOU -- YOU IMPOSTOR!

PAMELA -- PLEASE! NOT HERE, IN FRONT OF EDMOND!

IT WAS LUCKY MOTHER CAME HOME IN TIME TO LET ME OUT! WHY, I'LL --



SHE STRUCK LIKE A WILDCAT! AND EDMOND, WHO HAD SPOKEN SUCH TENDER WORDS TO ME -- DID NOTHING! INSTEAD, HE LOOKED ON, SMILING CYNICALLY, AS --

TAKE THAT! IT'S MY OWN DRESS -- THE ONE YOU STOLE -- BUT IT'S WORTH IT!

OH, NO! DON'T --

R-RIP!

SAY--YOU'RE QUITE A SPITFIRE, AREN'T YOU? IMAGINE ME--BEING TAKEN IN BY A LITTLE MISS PRIM LIKE THAT! BUT YOU COULD STILL SAVE MY EVENING, MISS--

CALL ME PAMELA--AND IT'LL BE A PLEASURE!

"BURNING WITH SHAME, I WATCHED THEM--SAW A BOTTLE BEING PASSED! WAS THIS PAMELA'S IDEA OF PLEASURE?"

"THERE WERE OTHERS WHO SAW THEM, TOO--BUT THEY DIDN'T SEEM TO CARE!"

Black Cat Club

NITE

OH, DEAR, HOW SIMPLY AWFUL!

IF I WAS HER MOTHER, I'D TEACH HER!

HUH? LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, PAMELA! THESE FOOLS SEEM TO INSIST ON INTRUDING ON OUR PRIVACY!

"I WAS ASHAMED OF ALL THIS--ASHAMED OF THE PART I HAD PLAYED! THROUGH MY SOBS CAME A VOICE--"

WHAT'S THE MATTER, AMY--GRIEVING FOR LOVER-BOY? WELL, MAYBE I SHOULDN'T BE TOO HAPPY, EITHER -- HE'S GOT PAMELA!

PAMELA--ALWAYS PAMELA! IF YOU LOVE HER SO MUCH, WHY DID YOU INTERFERE WHEN EDMOND KISSED ME? ANSWER ME THAT!

DON'T FLATTER YOURSELF--I WAS JUST PROTECTING A LAMB AGAINST A WOLF! -- SAY-- THERE THEY GO, AND HE'S NOT TOO SOBER! WE-WE'D BETTER GO AFTER THEM!

BILL--LOOK! THAT BARRIKER'S DOWN, SHOWING THE BRIDGE IS OPEN-- AND THEY'RE NOT STOPPING FOR IT!

"NEXT MOMENT -- DISASTER!"

HELP!

S-SAVE ME!

ME, TOO! --
I--I CAN'T SWIM!

I'M RIGHT
BEHIND YOU,
BILL!

THUD!

OH-HHH! DON'T
LET ME--DROWN!

HMMM! VERY
INTERESTING -- HOW
FAST YOU JUMPED IN
TO SAVE YOUR
BIG MOMENT!

I NOTICE
YOU DIDN'T
LOSE ANY TIME
GOING AFTER YOUR
HEART'S DESIRE!
--AND IF I NEVER
SEE YOU AGAIN,
BILL GREGG,
IT'LL BE
TOO SOON!

"NEXT DAY, THE
STORM BROKE!"

NEWS

--AND HE WAS SEEN
NECKING IN HIS CAR
WITH SOME GIRL LATER
--DRINKING, TOO!

SOME GIRL!
YOU MEAN
AMY GRANT!

--AND THEY WERE SO
LIT THEY DROVE RIGHT
OFF AN OPEN BRIDGE!

PAMELA SAYS IF SHE
HADN'T BEEN HANDY,
ANY WOULD HAVE
DROWNED!

SO THIS IS HOW YOU REPAY ME FOR ALL
I'VE DONE FOR YA! -- GALLIVANTIN'
AROUND IN DENS
OF SIN --
DRINKIN' --

BUT--BUT IT
ISN'T SO!
I --

SHE
DESERVES
TO HAVE
DROWNED!

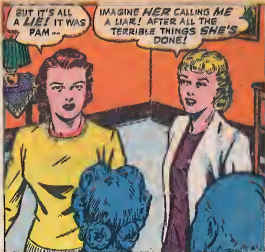
THE SHAME
OF IT ALL!

SO! I'VE
FOUND YOU
AT LAST!

AMY GRANT-LOCAL GIRL
IN NIGHT CLUB BRAWL
WITH MOVIE STAR

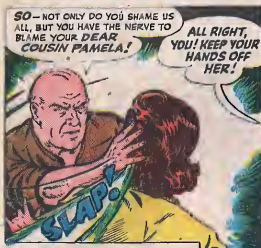


AND THIS IS HOW YOU REPAY ME-- YOUR AUNT, WHO'S DONE SO MUCH FOR YOU! LOCKING PAMELA IN HER ROOM, STEALING HER CLOTHES, DRINKING AND KISSING IN PUBLIC! YOU DIDN'T DESERVE HAVING PAMELA SAVE YOUR LIFE!



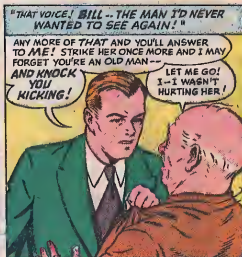
BUT IT'S ALL A LIE! IT WAS PAM--

IMAGINE HER CALLING ME A LIAR! AFTER ALL THE TERRIBLE THINGS SHE'S DONE!



SO-- NOT ONLY DO YOU SHAME US ALL, BUT YOU HAVE THE NERVE TO BLAME YOUR DEAR COUSIN PAMELA!

ALL RIGHT, YOU! KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF HER!

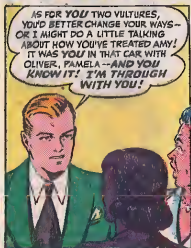


"THAT VOICE! BILL-- THE MAN I'D NEVER WANTED TO SEE AGAIN!"

ANY MORE OF THAT AND YOU'LL ANSWER TO ME! STRIKE HER ONCE MORE AND I MAY FORGET YOU'RE AN OLD MAN--

AND KNOCK YOU KICKING!

LET ME GO! I-- I WASN'T HURTING HER!



AS FOR YOU TWO VULTURES, YOU'D BETTER CHANGE YOUR WAYS-- OR I MIGHT DO A LITTLE TALKING ABOUT HOW YOU'VE TREATED AMY! IT WAS YOU IN THAT CAR WITH OLIVER, PAMELA--AND YOU KNOW IT! I'M THROUGH WITH YOU!



AND YOU, AMY! I LOVED YOU ONCE--UNTIL PAMELA TOLD ME YOU WERE MORE INTERESTED IN MOVIE HEROES THAN A PLAIN GUY LIKE ME! THAT'S WHY I TURNED TO HER! WELL, YOU CAN HAVE YOUR EDMOND OLIVER-- I CAN'T BEAT THAT KIND OF COMPETITION! MY CAR'S OUTSIDE AND I'M HEADED FOR NEW YORK! THIS IS -- GOODBYE!

"AND THEN HE WAS GONE, LEAVING MY ACHING HEART CRYING OUT FOR HIM! I KNEW NOW, BEYOND ANY DOUBT, THAT HE WAS THE MAN FOR ME-- NOW AND FOREVER! I WANTED NO PUPPET FROM HOLLYWOOD'S SILVER SCREEN, NO MATTER WHAT HIS GLAMOR-- MY ARMS YEARNED FOR JUST PLAIN BILL! AGAIN I REMEMBERED HOW HE HAD FOUGHT FOR ME AT THE NIGHT CLUB, AND SUDDENLY I KNEW THAT HE STILL LOVED ME-- JUST AS I LOVED HIM!"



"I RUSHED OUT -- BUT HE WAS ALREADY GONE! INSTEAD..."

AMY! HI! IT'S ME -- EDMOND OLIVER!



I -- I DON'T KNOW IF YOU CAN EVER FIND IT IN YOUR HEART TO FORGIVE ME -- BUT I WAS A RAT! AND THE WAY YOU SAVED MY LIFE --

YOU CAN PAY ME BACK -- BY SAVING MY LIFE! MOVE OVER -- AND HIT THE HIGHWAY TO NEW YORK, FAST!



THAT'S HIM -- THAT CAR UP AHEAD! STEP ON IT -- AND FORCE HIM TO THE SIDE OF THE ROAD!



WELL, WHAT A CHARMING COUPLE -- HAD TO CATCH UP TO GLOAT OVER ME, EH? OKAY -- BUT AFTER LAST NIGHT, I'VE GOT A DEBT TO SETTLE WITH YOU, OLIVER -- AND IT'S COMING NOW!



OH, NO, BILL! -- DON'T!

OH -- SO YOU WANT TO DEFEND YOUR BOY FRIEND, AMY! HAVE IT YOUR WAY -- BUT I GUESS YOU'VE GOT WHAT YOU ALWAYS WANTED!

I HAVE, BILL -- YOU!

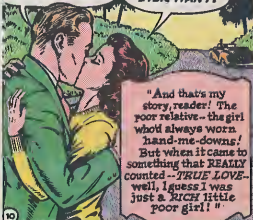


DARLING, DARLING -- DON'T YOU KNOW THAT WAY DOWN UNDERNEATH, IT'S ALWAYS BEEN YOU THAT I LOVED? IT WAS PAMELA'S LIES THAT CAME BETWEEN US -- AND LATER, I SUPPOSE I DID TRY TO MAKE YOU JEALOUS -- BUT IF YOU'LL HAVE ME NOW --



IF I'LL HAVE YOU! SWEETHEART, I'LL LOVE YOU -- ALWAYS --

JUST MY BILL -- AND THAT'S ALL I'LL EVER WANT!



"And that's my story, reader! The poor relative -- the girl who'd always worn hand-me-downs! But when it came to something that REALLY counted -- TRUE LOVE -- well, I guess I was just a RICH little poor girl!"

PILOT TO
PASSENGER:

"I LOVE YOU!"

ALICIA CURTIS had the kind of looks that add up to romance . . . a trim figure, delightfully curved and tapered, a soft, full, well-shaped mouth, a cascade of silky auburn hair, and the most enormous, appealing gray-green eyes in the world!

All through college, she was rushed for dates. Everyone wanted to go out with Alicia, everyone from the most serious student in the mathematics major to the light-hearted Lothario who captained the football team.

No, Alicia, never lacked for dates. She was offered enough romance and proposals of marriage to keep hundreds of girls happy. But Alicia Curtis had other plans.

Often, in the midnight dorm-dish sessions, when the pyjama-clad seniors would curl up and discuss their dates, Alicia would say, "Uh-uh! Not for me! I'm not saying 'yes' to the first male who waves a diamond ring at me. I've got plans . . . standards!"

That wasn't just talk, either. In her mind, Alicia carried an invisible, but definite, set of standards, a sort of test for every man she met. Was he good-looking? Tall enough? The right age? Did he have enough brain-power to make him intelligent, but enough gaiety to make him good company? What were his financial prospects? Sense of humor? Taste in clothes?

Every man she met was subjected to the test and if he didn't pass . . . one date, two dates and out! This feminine creature who looked so lovable, had an application form where her heart should be!

After graduation, Alicia fluffed out her auburn curls, tilted a small, pale blue hat over her eyes and went job-hunting. It took her exactly two days to find and land the job she wanted. It had glamor, opportunity and excitement and provided her with a small, blonde mahogany desk

between the offices of two of the best-looking junior vice-presidents in town! As secretary to Berry Raymond and Laurence James, Alicia had hit the jackpot in more ways than one.

Her mind was busy as she totalled the assets . . . an elegant advertising agency, a good job, and two eligible bachelors whose eyes lit up in appreciation every time she walked by.

It wasn't long before a triangle developed. Berry Raymond, tall, fair, attentive, brought flowers for Alicia's desk, dropped well-turned compliments into her ear, sighed after her longingly. Laurence James, tall, dark, wistful, had cold drinks sent to her desk, wrote bits of light love poetry, flashed an occasional smile of affection at her.

All this time, Alicia was busy applying her test . . . her set of high standards. And Berry was, by far the winner! He had managed to let her know, in so many subtle ways, what a great guy he was. He met the specifications, all right!

As for Laurence James, Alicia could see no future with him . . . he was too easy-going, too quiet and remote. He didn't seem capable of doing the daring, wonderful things that Berry talked about, of achieving the heights that Berry would. And yet . . . and yet . . . there was something about Laurence James that made Alicia day-dream, wander off into soft moods, feel warm and cozy all over.

"This won't do at all!" she told herself sharply. "You know Berry's the man for you . . . don't let this go on! Give Mr. James the slow, gentle kind of brush-off you do so well. Don't spoil the future. . ."

Which was precisely what Alicia did. Feeling ashamed of her softer emotions where Laurence James was concerned, she assumed a cold and indifferent manner towards him, ignored his advances, smiled at him rarely.

And, as he caught the idea, and began to drift away, a chill seemed to settle down in the offices, to settle in Alicia's heart as well. Berry and Laurence began to avoid each other, for Berry was the victor. Every time Alicia would turn and catch a glimpse of Laurence's tousled dark hair, something would catch in her throat.

"But that's silly," she reminded herself. "A girl's crazy to let her feelings run her life!" And she would smile all the more, cause her gray-green eyes to sparkle more brilliantly, when Berry came around.

Perhaps Alicia would have tried to make peace between the two men, had she had time. But the triangle was becoming sharper and sharper, when the Ace Flying account intervened. One of their best accounts, Berry had gotten it by delighting the heart of the president of the Ace Aviation Company.

"I fly my own little Ace, sir," he had said. "Sure is a super job you people put out! I'll be able to handle your account with that *personal touch*!"

The president of Ace had grinned, pumped Berry's hand warmly and said, "The account's yours, son. Just be at our convention in Cleveland a week from today . . . and come *flying* in! We like all our people to use Aces for all traveling!"

And so, Berry, Alicia and Laurence planned to fly out to Cleveland. Laurence had not wanted to fly. "Train's safer and just as good," he had said shortly, when the three were making their plans.

Berry had looked at him, a slightly contemptuous curl on his lips. "Scared?" he asked.

The little plane took off shortly after dawn on a clear, crisp morning. Berry, at the controls, looked even more dashing than ever. Alicia, if she needed any reassurance, had it, as she admired Berry's clean-cut profile and competent hands. And then, fear clutched at her heart as the sky turned a lowering gray and a wall of black clouds seemed to rush at the little plane.

"Berry . . . Berry . . ." she started to

say. Her eyes widened. The fear grew deeper, more intense. For the plane, caught in a raging storm, was out of control!

"Take her down! Take her down, man!" Laurence James' voice broke the unearthly silence. "You've got too much weather to fight. *Take her down!*"

There was no understanding in Berry's face. His knuckles showed white as his hands froze on the stick, rendered motionless, powerless by fear. "He . . . he can't move!" Alicia shuddered.

"Then get off the controls! *I'll* take over!" Alicia's heart thudded as Laurence balanced himself toward a Berry. "Get away from there!"

Berry did not move.

"Sorry, old man!" Laurence whispered, as his fist shot out, connecting sharply with Berry's jaw. "This will keep you out of mischief while I try to bring us down in one piece!"

Alicia wept, silently, bitterly, as Laurence James' strong, competent hands took over the controls. Zooming under the lowering cloud bank, the little Ace moved on serenely, gliding down, down, down to an easy landing.

"Laurence . . . Larry . . ." Alicia wanted to tell him something, something so important that her heart seemed to swell with it. "I'm sorry . . . you see, I thought . . . I . . ."

"I know what you thought!" he said coldly. "You thought you could add up the assets, figure out the profits, and get in on the best deal! But sometimes, your addition can be *wrong*!"

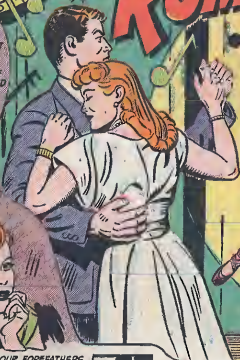
Hearthroken, feeling lost and unwanted, Alicia turned to climb out of the plane. She didn't want Berry any more. Berry was a coward. And as for Larry, he had read her like a book . . . and scorned her as she had thought she scorned him.

Blindly, she started to leave, when a hand gripped her shoulder. "Luckily, I can add, too!" Larry said, his lips very close to hers. "And I know what I want, too!" His lips came closer. "And I want *you*, darling!"

DANCE of ROMANCE

"DANCING WAS ALWAYS IN MY BLOOD --AND THE RHYTHM OF MUSIC SET MY HEART TO THROBBING! BUT WHEN I FINALLY MET THE ONE MAN WHOSE LIFE-PARTNER I YEARNED TO BE-- WHOSE ARMS I WANTED AROUND ME ALWAYS-- I LEARNED THAT BITTER ANGUISH AND TORMENT COULD LURK BEHIND THE MUSIC OF A

DANCE of ROMANCE!



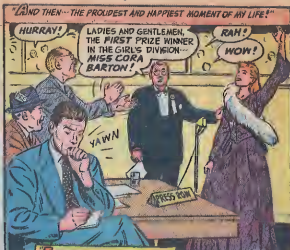
"HISTORY TELLS US OUR FOREFATHERS DANCED LIKE THIS..."



"BUT FASHIONS CHANGE, AND IT WAS AT JUKE BOX JIVE-SESSIONS LIKE THIS ONE THAT I LEARNED TO LOVE DANCING!"



MY STORY BEGINS AT THE HARVEST JAZZ FESTIVAL AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN. I WAS A THRILL AT MY FIRST BIG TIME DANCE CONTEST-- FERVENTLY HOPING FOR ONE OF THE CONSOLATION PRIZES!"



HURRAY!

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE FIRST PRIZE WINNER IN THE GIRLS' DIVISION-- MISS CORA BARTON!

RAH!

WOW!

YAWN

PRESS ROW

"NEXT MORNING, THE PRESS NOTICES WERE ALL GLOWINGLY WONDERFUL-- EXCEPT ONE!"

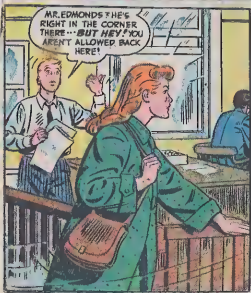
THE DANCE BEAT

by MARK EDMONDS

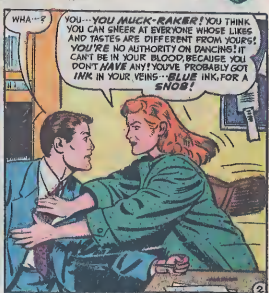
SINCE THERE WAS NO BALLET LAST NIGHT, I WANDERED OVER TO THE JAZZ FESTIVAL, WHERE A MISS CORA BARTON WON FIRST PRIZE WITH AN INFANTILE LACK OF GRACE. I CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT MISS BARTON LEARNED TO DANCE AMONG THE HEADHUNTERS OF BORNEO...

"I READ THE CRUEL WORDS --AND RAGE AND HUMILIATION FILLED MY HEART!"

IF HE THINKS HE CAN RIDDLE ME LIKE THAT IN PUBLIC AND GET AWAY WITH IT, HE'S PICKED THE WRONG VICTIM! I'LL FIX MR. MARK EDMONDS!



MR. EDMONDS, HE'S RIGHT IN THE CORNER THERE... BUT HEY! YOU AREN'T ALLOWED BACK HERE!

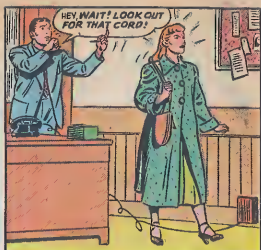


WHA--?

YOU-- YOU MUCK-RAKER! YOU THINK YOU CAN SNEER AT EVERYONE WHOSE LIKES AND TASTES ARE DIFFERENT FROM YOURS! YOU'RE NO AUTHORITY ON DANCING! IT CAN'T BE IN YOUR BLOOD, BECAUSE YOU DON'T HAVE ANY! YOU'VE PROBABLY GOT INK IN YOUR VEINS-- BLUE INK, FOR A SNOB!



"**HE WAS CHARMING AT LUNCH--AND WHEN HE ASKED IF HE COULD ATONE FOR HIS COLUMN BY TAKING ME TO THE BALLET, I COULDN'T HELP BUT SAY YES!**"



"**THE HUMOR OF THE SITUATION SUDDENLY BURST UPON ME... I COULD IMAGINE HOW RIDICULOUS I MUST LOOK, SITTING ON THE FLOOR LIKE THAT! SUDDENLY HE SEEMED A WARMER, FRIENDLIER PERSON...**"



"**I THOUGHT I'D TRY TO GET HIM TO SEE THINGS MY WAY, SO THAT HE'D NEVER AGAIN LACE INTO ANY POOR YOUNG ADDICT IN HIS COLUMN! I TOOK HIM TO A SWING-DANCE NIGHT CLUB!**"



THE OLD BLAZING ANGER AT HIS SNOBBISHNESS SURGED BACK, AND I WALKED OUT ON HIM! BUT HE CAUGHT UP WITH ME OUTSIDE...

YOU NEEDN'T BOTHER TO TAKE ME HOME, MR. EDMONDS! I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR SNIDE REMARKS!

GOSH, CORA, YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL WHEN YOU'RE SORE! I... I'VE NEVER FELT THIS WAY...

DARLING...

"SUDDENLY, IMPULSIVELY, HE TOOK ME IN HIS ARMS! AND BEFORE I KNEW WHAT I WAS DOING, I WAS RESPONDING EAGERLY TO HIS FERVENT KISS!"

HEY! IF YOU TWO YOUNG UNS ARE IN LOVE, A STREET CORNER IS NO PLACE TO TELL EACH OTHER ABOUT IT!

IN LOVE? WELL, I KNOW I AM, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHETHER SHE--

I... THAT KISS... I DIDN'T KNOW IT UNTIL THEN, BUT I GUESS IT'S HIT ME TOO, DARLING!

CORA, YOU'RE WONDERFUL! I FELL IN LOVE WITH YOU THE MOMENT YOU FELL DOWN IN FRONT OF ME... BUT I NEVER DARED TO HOPE THAT YOU... CORA, WILL YOU... THAT IS, WOULD YOU...

IF THIS IS A PROPOSAL, MARK-- THE ANSWER'S YES!

THIS TIME IT WASN'T A HURRIED KISS... BUT THE REAL THING! MY HEART BEAT STRONGER... STRONGER... FOR I KNEW I'D FOUND MY MAN... FOREVER!

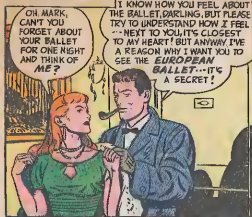
OH... MARK...

THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED WERE FILLED WITH THRILLING EXCITEMENT! THERE WAS THE EXCITING OF SHOPPING FOR A TROUSSEAU TOGETHER--

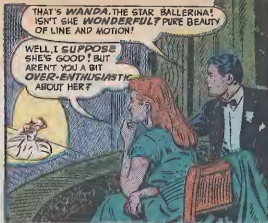
IT'S... LOVELY, DEAR! BUT I'VE BEEN THINKING, PERHAPS WE OUGHT TO POSTPONE THE WEDDING A WHILE-- WITH MY SMALL SALARY AS A DANCE CRITIC, I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TO SUPPORT YOU PROPERLY!

MONSENSE, MARK! I'VE STILL GOT MY JOB AS A DANCE INSTRUCTRESS! ANYWAY, IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE YOU'LL BE ABLE TO BUY ME CLOTHES LIKE THIS!

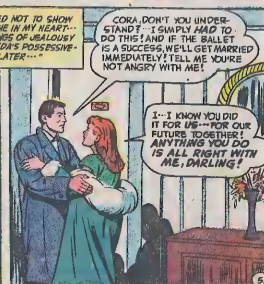
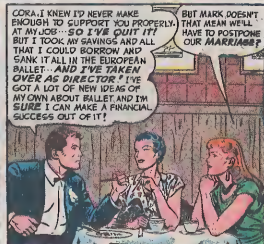
"THEN, ONE NIGHT, MARK ASKED ME TO GO WITH HIM TO A NEW BALLET!"



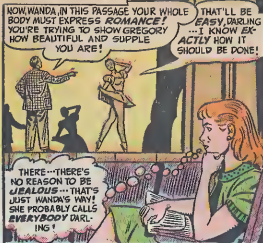
"CURIOUS ABOUT THE SECRET, I AGREED TO GO!"



"AFTER THE SHOW, MARK TOOK ME BACK STAGE..."



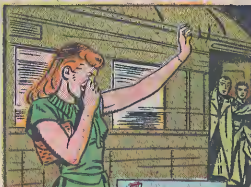
"I BEGAN COMING TO THE REHEARSALS EVERY DAY...I COULDN'T STAY AWAY!"



"FINALLY, THE TIME CAME FOR MARK AND THE BALLET TO LEAVE FOR THE OUT-OF-TOWN TRYOUTS..."



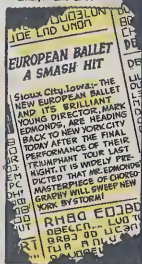
"AS THE TRAIN PULLED OUT, I HAD A STRANGE FOREBODING THAT EACH MILE HE TRAVELED WOULD TAKE HIM FURTHER FROM ME...AND CLOSER TO WANDA'S ARMS!"



"TIME PASSED, BUT THE IMAGE OF MARK WAS ALWAYS IN MY MIND AND HEART...AND I TRIED TO BELIEVE THAT HE, TOO, COULD NOT FORGET OUR LOVE!"



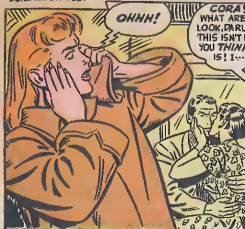
"TWO WEEKS LATER..."



"EATEN BY THE IMPATIENCE OF LOVE, I DECIDED TO BOARD MARK'S TRAIN AT 125TH STREET AND RIDE IN WITH HIM..."



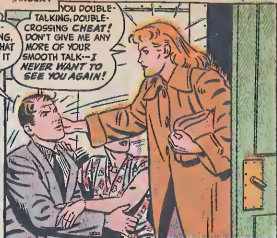
"**HE** THREW OPEN THE DOOR TO HIS COMPARTMENT--AND REELED BACK IN HORROR! I FELT THE WORLD DISSOLVING BENEATH MY FEET--"



OH!!

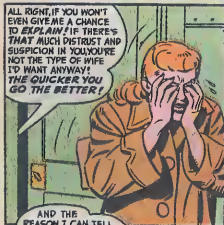
CORA! WHAT ARE-- LOOK, DARLING, THIS ISN'T WHAT YOU THINK IT IS! I...

"**WHEN** ANGUISH AND HEARTBREAK GAVE WAY TO A COLD, RAGING ANGER!"



YOU DOUBLE-TALKING, DOUBLE-CROSSING CHEAT! DON'T GIVE ME ANY MORE OF YOUR SMOOTH TALK--I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN!

ALL RIGHT, IF YOU WON'T EVEN GIVE ME A CHANCE TO EXPLAIN! IF THERE'S THAT MUCH DISTRUST AND SUSPICION IN YOU, YOU'RE NOT THE TYPE OF WIFE I'D WANT ANYWAY! THE QUICKER YOU GO THE BETTER!



AND THE REASON I CAN TELL YOU THIS NOW IS THAT I KNOW I'VE WON! MARK IS IN SUCH A RAGE AT WHAT YOU SAID THAT HE WOULDN'T TAKE YOU BACK IF YOU CAME CRAWLING!... WHY, YOU... DON'T YOU STRIKE AT ME--!



"**HEARTBROKEN** AND BLINDED BY TEARS, I REACHED THE VESTIBULE--ONLY TO FIND THAT WANDA HAD FOLLOWED ME!"

HA, YOU PLAYED RIGHT INTO MY HANDS--I SAW YOU BOARD THE TRAIN AND I ARRANGED THAT SCENE JUST FOR YOUR BENEFIT! I WENT TO MARK'S COMPARTMENT, THREW MY ARMS AROUND HIM AND KISSED HIM--SAYING

IT WAS FOR LUCK IN THE NEW YORK OPENING! I KNEW YOU'D BREAK IN ON US... AND YOU DID!



OH!!

I'LL FIX YOU-- FOR GOOD!



"I CLUTCHED AT A HAND GRIP...HELD TIGHT! BUT WANDA'S MOMENTUM CARRIED HER FORWARD!"

OH-HH!



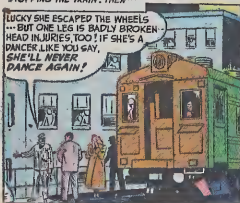
NEXT MOMENT...

HELP!
HELP!



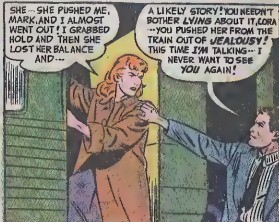
"SOMEBODY AT ONE OF THE TRAIN WINDOWS SAW HER FALL, AND PULLED THE EMERGENCY CORD, STOPPING THE TRAIN! THEN..."

LUCKY SHE ESCAPED THE WHEELS...BUT ONE LEG IS BADLY BROKEN...HEAD INJURIES, TOO! IF SHE'S A DANCER LIKE YOU SAY, SHE'LL NEVER DANCE AGAIN!



SHE--SHE PUSHED ME, MARK, AND I ALMOST WENT OUT! I GRABBED HOLD AND THEN SHE LOST HER BALANCE AND...

A LIKELY STORY! YOU NEEDN'T BOTHER LYING ABOUT IT, CORA...YOU PUSHED HER FROM THE TRAIN OUT OF JEALOUSY! THIS TIME I'M TALKING--I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN!



"IT WAS A NIGHT OF MISERY, OF ANGUISHED HEARTBREAK! A FEW SHORT HOURS AGO, THERE HAD BEEN ONLY LOVE...BUT NOW..."

I CAN'T BLAME MARK--HE'S BEEN GUILTYLESS IN ALL THIS, AND APPEARANCES WERE AGAINST ME! IT'S MY FAULT, MY FAULT--OH, IF I HAD ONLY TRUSTED HIM!



"IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF A NIGHTMARE PERIOD FOR ME! MY GRIEF AND ANGUISH WERE ALWAYS WITH ME, EVEN ON MY JOB..."

MISS BARTON, SOME OF YOUR PUPILS HAVE BEEN COMPLAINING ABOUT YOU--THEY SAY YOU'RE GLOOMY, INATTENTIVE, DISAGREEABLE TO BE WITH! I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, BUT UNLESS YOU CHANGE, YOU'LL HAVE TO GO!

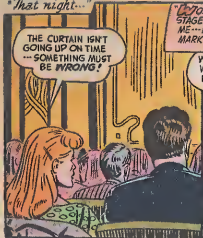


"Then..."

WE COULD
EUROPEAN BALLET
OPENING TONIGHT
NEW YORK-- MARK
"SOMONOV'S" EUROPEAN BALLET OPENS TONIGHT ON SHERKLE, DESPITE THE LOSS OF ITS STAR BALLERINA. A YOUNG UNDERSTUDY WILL DANCE THE LEAD ROLE...

THAT
OPENING LURED ME LIKE A MAGNET--I COULDN'T STAY AWAY! FOR MARK'S SAKE--I PRAYED IT WOULD BE A SUCCESS!"

"That night..."



THE CURTAIN ISN'T GOING UP ON TIME -- SOMETHING MUST BE **WRONG!**

"**WORRIED, I MADE MY WAY BACK-STAGE! THE STAGE-MANAGER KNEW ME... BUT HE DIDN'T KNOW THAT MARK AND I HAD BROKEN UP!**"

WHAT'S WRONG, PETER?



OH, HELLO, MISS BARTON -- **EVERY-THING'S WRONG! WANDA'S STAND-IN JUST CAME UP WITH THE WORST CASE OF STAGEFRIGHT I'VE EVER SEEN... SHE'S HYSTERICAL! THE SHOW CAN'T GO ON WITHOUT HER! AND MARK ISN'T HERE, EITHER! HE WAS CALLED TO THE HOSPITAL... WANDA TOOK A TURN FOR THE WORSE!**

"**MARK'S BALLET -- HEADED FOR RUIN! I SAW HIS HOPES AND FUTURE BLASTED... AND IT WAS ALL MY FAULT! IF THERE WAS ONLY SOMETHING I COULD DO TO MAKE UP FOR THE HARM I'D CAUSED HIM... AND THEN, SUDDENLY, I KNEW WHAT I WOULD HAVE TO DO!**"

LISTEN, PETER, I'M GOING ON IN WANDA'S PLACE!

"**YOU??? NOW EVERYONE'S GONE CRAZY! YOU'RE A JAZZ-DANCER... HOW CAN YOU PINCH-HIT IN A BALLET LEAD?**"



YES, I'M A JAZZ-DANCER BY PREFERENCE, BUT I'M SOMETHING MORE THAN THAT -- A **NATURAL DANCER!** I TOOK BALLET TRAINING WHEN I WAS YOUNG, AND WHAT'S MORE, I ATTENDED ENOUGH REHEARSALS SO THAT I **KNOW WANDA'S ROUTINES BY HEART!**

WELL, OKAY! WELL BOTH BE LAUGHED OUT OF TOWN BY TOMORROW, BUT THAT'S BETTER THAN CALLING OFF THE PERFORMANCE ENTIRELY!

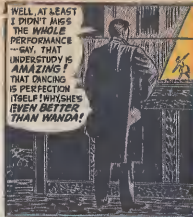


"**THIS WOULD BE THE LEAST I COULD DO FOR MARK, FOR MY LOVE! THIS WOULD BE MY DANCE OF ROMANCE!**"



"**WITH EVERY UNFAMILIAR STEP A PRAYER, COULD I GO THROUGH WITH IT? I KNEW I HAD TO, HAD TO -- BECAUSE THIS WAS GOING TO BE A MONUMENT TO MY LOVE FOR MARK -- A MONUMENT TO A LOVE THAT COULD NEVER BE!**"

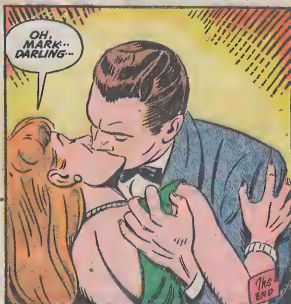
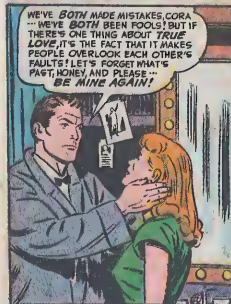




THEN, AS THE PERFORMANCE ENDED...

CONGRATULATIONS, EDMONDS! IT'S A GREAT BALLET... TERRIFIC, IN FACT! AN ABSOLUTELY ASTOUNDING PERFORMANCE... THAT LEAD BALLERINA WAS SUPERB!

BRavo! HURRAH!





THE FLEETS IN! ...MAGIC WORDS THAT TELL OF FAST-BEATING HEARTS AND CAREFREE HAPPINESS! BUT SOMETIMES THERE ARE TEARS, TOO, AND THE SOUL-SEARING ANGUISH THAT CAN COME TO A GIRL WHO'S

A Sailor's Sweetheart

IT ALL BEGAN ON A SUNNY DAY IN JUNE, WHEN MARY AMBERS RECEIVED THAT FATEFUL CALL...

I PROMISED YOU A GOOD TIME IF YOU CAME TO VISIT ME, JILL... AND THIS IS IT! I'VE JUST ARRANGED A DATE FOR US WITH A COUPLE OF SAILORS!

SAILORS? BUT... BUT THEY GO FOR THAT GIRL-IN-EVERY-PORST STUFF MARY... AND I'M NOT EXACTLY THE TYPE FOR THAT!

GET DRESSED YOU DODO, AND FORGET IT---WE'RE ONLY GOING ON A PICNIC ANYWAY! THAT WAS TONY THAT CALLED AND I KNOW HIM---HE'S A GOOD GUY, FROM A WEALTHY FAMILY!

BUT YOU DON'T KNOW WHOM HE'S BRINGING FOR ME... AND THAT'S WHAT I'M WORRIED ABOUT!



"BUT THAT WAS BEFORE I MET JAKE MILLER! JUST ONE LOOK AT HIS SHY, BOYISH FACE... AND I KNEW THAT ALL MY FEARS HAD BEEN NEEDLESS!"

SO THAT'S JILL, EH? MEET JAKE-- A LITTLE BASHFUL, BUT THE BEST DURN DECK-SWABBER IN UNCLE SAM'S NAVY!"

HI, JILL...



GOLLY, I KNOW I OUGHTA BE MAKING CONVERSATION ... BUT I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO A PRETTY GIRL LIKE YOU!

THEN ... THEN LET ME START IT! IS IT TRUE WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT YOU SAILORS ... A GIRL IN EVERY PORT?



"I WAS JUST TALKING TO BREAK THE ICE, BUT MY HEART POUNDED STRANGELY AS I AWAITED HIS ANSWER!"

WELL, YOU SEE, JILL, I DON'T USUALLY ... UH ... THAT IS ...

WHAT LOVER-BOYS TRYING TO TELL YOU IS THAT HE'S THE QUIET TYPE, HONEY ... HE DOESN'T BOTHER WITH GALS MUCH! I EVEN HAD TROUBLE TALKING HIM INTO THIS DATE!



"I WAS RELAXED THEN, WITH AN ODD FEELING OF SATISFACTION! AS THE CAR SPED INTO THE SUBURBAN HILLS ..."

HEY, WHAT GIVES BACK THERE? THEY STILL STRANGERS?

I KNOW WHAT'LL FIX THAT! HIT A BUMP ... AND HARD!



BY CHANCE COLLISION, THAT WAS ALL ... BUT AS WE WERE HURLED TOGETHER, I FELT JAKE'S ARMS TIGHTEN AROUND ME! NEXT MOMENT ...

OH!


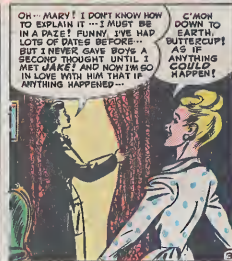
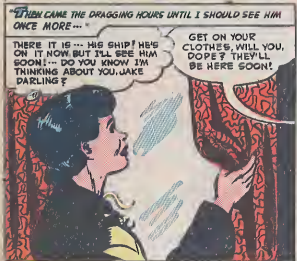
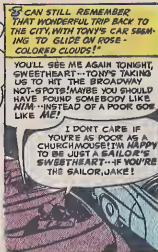
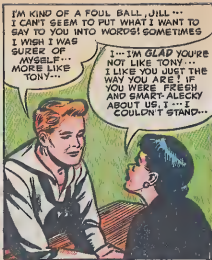


JEEPERS, JILL, I ... I'M SORRY! I DON'T KNOW WHAT CAME OVER ME! PLEASE ... SAY YOU'RE NOT MAD!

IT WAS KIND OF ... WELL, SUDDEN, WASN'T IT? BUT DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME BEING SORE! YOU SEE, I ... LIKED IT!



"I WAS SHOCKED BY THE DARING OF MY OWN WORDS! COULD THIS BE JILL BOOTH, WHO'D ALWAYS BEEN SO PROUD? IT WAS AS IF JAKE HAD CAST A SPELL OVER ME... A SWEET SPELL WHICH CLUNG THROUGHOUT THE AFTER-NOON..."

HOWDEYA LIKE THAT? NEITHER OF 'EM HEARD A WORD WE'VE BEEN SAYING TO 'EM!

SH-HHH! THEY'RE JAKE AND JILL... FAR AWAY IN LOVELAND! LEAVE 'EM ALONE!

I'M KIND OF A FOUL BALL, JILL... I CAN'T SEEM TO PUT WHAT I WANT TO SAY TO YOU INTO WORDS! SOMETIMES I WISH I WAS SURE OF MYSELF... MORE LIKE TONY...

I... I'M GLAD YOU'RE NOT LIKE TONY... I LIKE YOU JUST THE WAY YOU ARE! IF YOU WERE FRESH AND SMART-ALECKY ABOUT US, I... I COULDN'T STAND...

THE REST OF THE DAY FLED IN A SHIMMERING HAZE OF DELIGHT! FOR A BOY AND A GIRL HAD FOUND EACH OTHER... AND WERE LOST IN THE MIRACLE OF NEWBORN LOVE!"

NOTHING LIKE THIS HAS EVER HAPPENED TO ME BEFORE, HONEY! IT'S CRAZY--WE'VE ONLY JUST MET--BUT I'M HEAD-OVER-HEELS ABOUT YOU!

THAT LOOK IN YOUR EYES...THE SOUND OF YOUR VOICE WHEN YOU SAY IT... PLEASE DON'T STOP...EVER!

SS CAN STILL REMEMBER THAT WONDERFUL TRIP BACK TO THE CITY, WITH TONY'S CAR SEEMING TO GLIDE ON ROSE-COLORED CLOUDS!"

YOU'LL SEE ME AGAIN TONIGHT, SWEETHEART--TONY'S TAKING US TO HIT THE BROADWAY NOT-SPOTS! MAYBE YOU SHOULD HAVE FOUND SOMEBODY LIKE HIM--INSTEAD OF A POOR GUY LIKE ME!

I DON'T CARE IF YOU'RE AS POOR AS A CHURCH MOUSE! I'M HAPPY TO BE JUST A SAILOR'S SWEETHEART--IF YOU'RE THE SAILOR, JAKE!

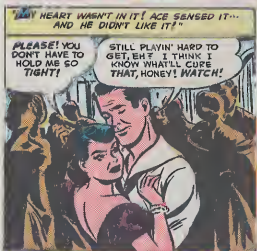
"THEN CAME THE DRAGGING HOURS UNTIL I SHOULD SEE HIM ONCE MORE..."

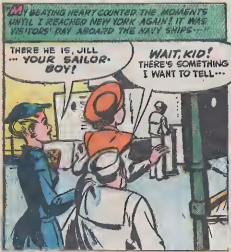
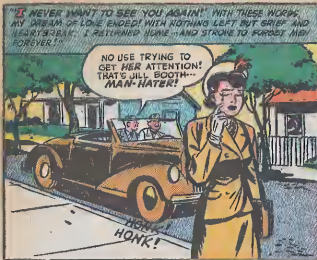
THERE IT IS... HIS SHIP! HE'S ON IT NOW BUT I'LL SEE HIM SOON!... DO YOU KNOW I'M THINKING ABOUT YOU, JAKE DARLING?

GET ON YOUR CLOTHES, WILL YOU, DOPE? THEY'LL BE HERE SOON!

OH... MARY! I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT... I MUST BE IN A PAZE! FUNNY I'VE HAD LOTS OF DATES BEFORE... BUT I NEVER GAVE BOYS A SECOND THOUGHT UNTIL I MET JAKE! AND NOW I'M SO IN LOVE WITH HIM THAT IF ANYTHING HAPPENED--

C'MON DOWN TO EARTH, BUTTERCUP! AS IF ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN!





"OUT... OUT INTO THE OPEN SEA!"

IT'S GETTING... ROUGHER! BUT THAT'S WHAT I WANT! ANYTHING'S BETTER THAN GOING BACK TO AN EMPTY LIFE!



SOMEONE'S AFTER ME! IF... IF I CAN ONLY GET SOME MORE SPEED OUT OF THIS CRATE...

AVAST, THERE! KEEP CLEAR! YOU'RE HEADING STRAIGHT FOR US!

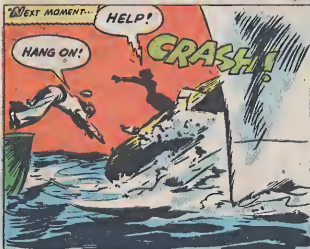


NEXT MOMENT...

HELP!

HANG ON!

CRASH!



THE WATERS CLOSED OVER MY HEAD AND UNCONSCIOUSNESS CLAIMED ME. I DIDN'T FEEL THE STRONG ARMS WHICH SEIZED ME, DREW ME TO THE SURFACE!

GOOD WORK, SAILOR! IS... IS SHE ALIVE?

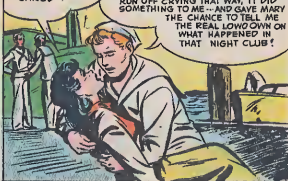
I THINK SO... BUT LET'S GET HER TO LAND QUICKLY!



SLOWLY, PAINFULLY, I CAME TO, HATING THE UNKNOWN. RESCUER WHO HAD RESTORED ME TO A LIFE WHICH COULD HOLD ONLY PAIN! I OPENED MY EYES TO... JAKE!

WHY DID YOU... DO IT? IT WASN'T AS IF... YOU CARED...

LADY, CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE THE PRIZE BURNED FOOL IN HISTORY? I NEVER LET TONY TELL ME THE REAL STORY! BUT WHEN I SAW YOU RUN OFF CRYING THAT WAY, IT DID SOMETHING TO ME... AND GAVE MARY THE CHANCE TO TELL ME THE REAL LOWDOWN ON WHAT HAPPENED IN THAT NIGHT CLUB!



"YEARS NO LONGER... THERE WERE STARS IN MY EYES! WE LOOKED AT EACH OTHER FOR A MOMENT... HAPPILY... AND KNEW THAT A SAILOR'S SWEETHEART HAD COME HOME! IT WAS JAKE AND ULL... FOREVER!"



ROMEO of the RANCH



"IT'S A FAR CRY FROM A CULTURED AND LOVELY AUTHORESS TO A RUGGED RIDER OF THE RANGE, ISN'T IT? NOT MUCH CHANCE, THEN, THAT DIANA MORRISON COULD ACCEPT THE LOVE OF A SIMPLE, UNTUTORED COWBOY! IT WAS QUITE A JOKE ON TEK RANDALL... SO GO AHEAD AND LAUGH, DIANA! LAUGH... BUT YOU'D BETTER WIPE THAT TEAR AWAY FIRST!"

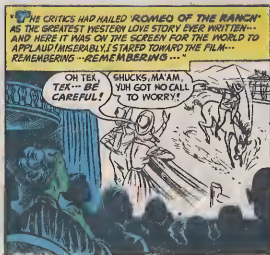
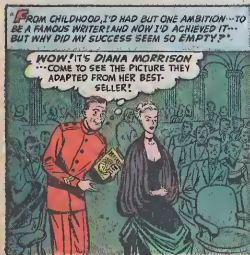
"FROM CHILDHOOD, I'D HAD BUT ONE AMBITION--TO BE A FAMOUS WRITER! AND NOW I'D ACHIEVED IT... BUT WHY DID MY SUCCESS SEEM SO EMPTY?"

"WOW! IT'S DIANA MORRISON... COME TO SEE THE PICTURE THEY ADAPTED FROM HER BEST-SELLER!"

"THE CRITICS HAD HAILED 'ROMEO OF THE RANCH' AS THE GREATEST WESTERN LOVE STORY EVER WRITTEN... AND HERE IT WAS ON THE SCREEN FOR THE WORLD TO APPLAUD! MISERABLY, I STARED TOWARD THE FILM... REMEMBERING... REMEMBERING..."

"OH TEK, TEK... BE CAREFUL!"

"SHUCKS, MA'AM, YUH GOT NO CALL TO WORRY!"



"I REMEMBER HOW IT REALLY HAD BEEN...NOW, AS AN UNKNOWN YOUNG WRITER, I HAD JOURNEYED TO ARIZONA, SEEKING MATERIAL FOR THE WESTERN LOVE NOVEL I PLANNED..."



OH TEX, TEX... BE CAREFUL!

SHUCKS, MA'AM, YUH GOT NO CALL TO WORRY!



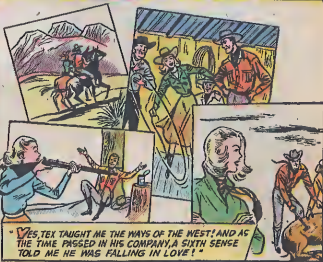
HERE HE COMES... STRONG...FEARLESS! WHY, HE---HE'S A PERFECT TYPE FOR THE MALE LEAD IN MY BOOK!

SEE, MISS? IT WAS EASY!

"IF ONLY I COULD GET CLOSE TO HIM... STUDY HIM! BUT HOW? IT WAS TEX WHO GAVE ME THE SOLUTION..."

GUESS YUH DONT KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE WEST, HUNT... SAY, MEBBE I COULD TEACH YUH!

WHY, THAT WOULD BE JUST...SWELL!

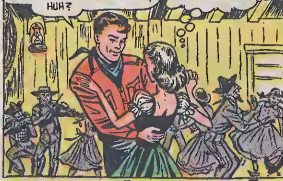


"YES, TEX TAUGHT ME THE WAYS OF THE WEST! AND AS THE TIME PASSED IN HIS COMPANY, A SIXTH SENSE TOLD ME HE WAS FALLING IN LOVE!"

"TEX AND ME...IT WAS RIDICULOUS! BUT I HAD TO FIND OUT ABOUT A COWBOY...AND ROMANCE! PERHAPS I LED HIM ON..."

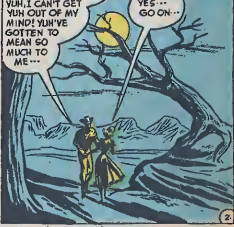
DANCIN' WITH YUH...HAVIN' YUH IN MY ARMS THIS WAY...IT'S GIVEN ME THE COURAGE TO TELL YUH SOMETHIN'! LET'S...GO OUTSIDE, HUH?

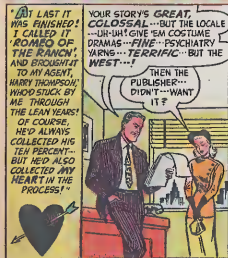
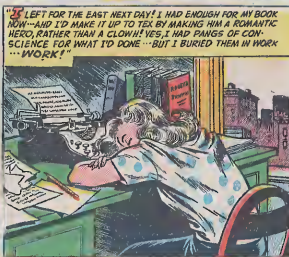
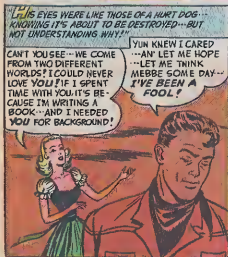
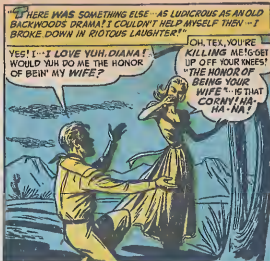
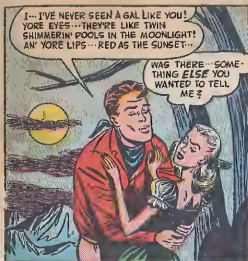
HERE IT COMES! EVERYTHING HE SAYS AND DOES...I'LL REMEMBER IT FOR MY BOOK!



DIANA--DARLIN'... EVER SINCE I SAW YUH, I CAN'T GET YUH OUT OF MY MIND! YUH'VE GOTTEN TO MEAN SO MUCH TO ME...

YES... GO ON...

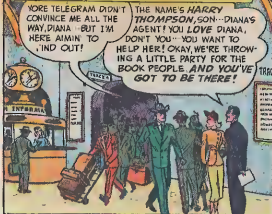




SENT THE TELEGRAM...FEELING LIKE A CHEAP LOWDOWN FRAUD!! ALMOST WISHED TEX WOULDN'T COME...BUT SOMEHOW, I KNEW HE WOULD! AND SO...A FEW DAYS LATER...

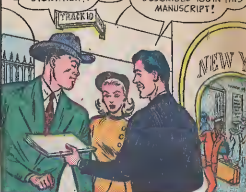
YORE TELEGRAM DIDN'T CONVINCE ME ALL THE WAY, DIANA...BUT I'M HERE AIMIN' TO FIND OUT!

THE NAME'S HARRY THOMPSON, SON--DIANA'S AGENT! YOU LOVE DIANA, DON'T YOU? YOU WANT TO HELP HER! OKAY, WE'RE THROWING A LITTLE PARTY FOR THE BOOK PEOPLE, AND YOU'VE GOT TO BE THERE!



SO THAT'S IT...ANOTHER OF YORE CHEAP TRICKS! YUH WANT TO SHOW EM I'M JUST AS RIDICULOUS AS THE WAY YUH WROTE IT IN YORE STORY, HUH?

NOW DON'T GET ALL HET UP! DIANA'S NUTS ABOUT YOU--SHE TOLD ME! IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE THAT, READ HOW SHE'S DESCRIBED YOU IN THIS MANUSCRIPT!



IS...IS HE TELLIN' THE TRUTH? YUH HAVEN'T MADE A CLOWN OF ME IN YORE BOOK? WHAT'S IN THERE IS YORE REAL FEELIN'S?

WHY...WHY, OF COURSE...



I COULD FEEL MY CONSCIENCE CRYING OUT WITHIN ME AGAIN! THERE WAS HARRY, THE MAN I LOVED, LYING---AND THE SIMPLE HONESTY OF TEX'S EYES STABBED ME LIKE A KNIFE! THIS PLAN...IT WAS SCHEMING, UNDERHAND! BUT I COULDN'T STOP IT...IT WAS TOO LATE! THAT NIGHT, AT THE PARTY...



I'VE READ YORE STORY, DARLIN', AN' GOLLY...I...I NEVER DREAMED YUH LOVED ME THAT MUCH!

THERE THEY ARE, FOLKS: REAL LIVE LOVERS...RIGHT OUT OF THE BOOK!



I WANTED TO TELL TEX IT WASN'T SO...BUT HARRY CUT ME SHORT!

DRINK? NO, THANKS... AIN'T NEVER GOT THE HABIT, SOMEHOW!

NONSENSE! THIS WON'T HURT YOU...IT'S JUST LEMONADE!



SPUT...ARGH!...YUH SHORE MAKE FUNNY LEMONADE IN THE EAST, PARDNER!

HAW-HAW!

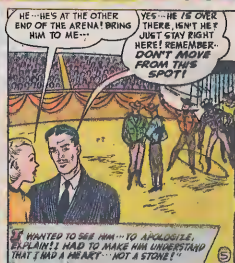
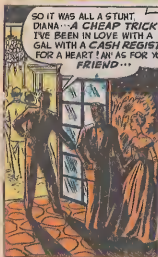
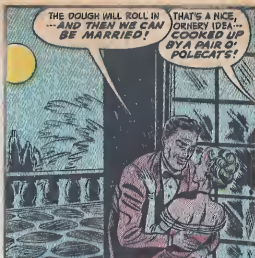
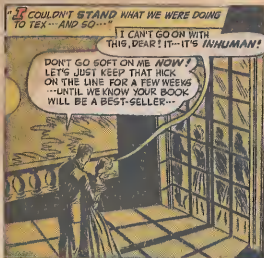
HARRY! DIANA!...GOT A MINUTE?

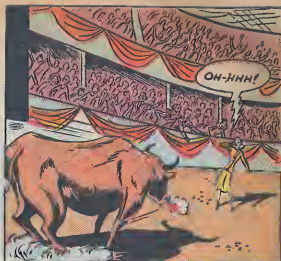


THE PAPERS WILL EAT ALL THIS UP! I'LL PUBLISH "ROMEO OF THE RANCH"...AND WE'LL SELL A MILLION COPIES!

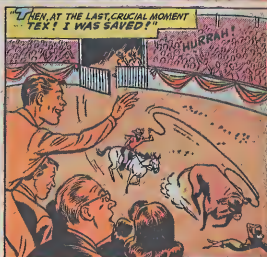
IT WORKED FINE, EHE JUST ONE OF MY SENSATIONAL IDEAS!







"THE BULL WAS ALMOST UPON ME! I TRIED TO RUN... TRIPPED... FELT MYSELF FALL! THE DEAFENING HOOF-BEATS GREW CLOSER... CLOSER..."



YOU... YOU VULTURE!
HERE, TAKE YOUR RING
...WE'RE THROUGH!

AND SO I SAT IN THE THEATRE...
REMEMBERING... WATCHING MY
BEST-SELLER ON THE SCREEN! I WAS
A FINANCIAL SUCCESS... A FAILURE
IN LOVE! FOR MY HEART WAS EMPTY...

THE... END?
NO, NO... IT CAN'T
BE! I WON'T
LET IT BE!

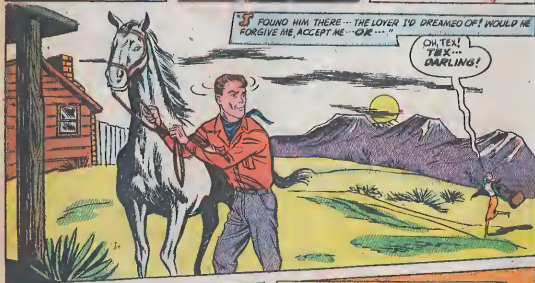
THE END

IT WASN'T THE END... IT WAS THE
BEGINNING! MY HEART CRIED
OUT TO ME WHAT MY BRAIN HAD
REFUSED TO RECOGNIZE... THAT
THERE WAS ONLY ONE MAN FOR
ME... LOYAL, LOVABLE TEX!
SO I BOARDED A PLANE... RODE
TOWARDS ROMANCE!



I FOUND HIM THERE... THE LOVER I'D DREAMED OF! WOULD HE
FORGIVE ME, ACCEPT ME... OR...

OH, TEX!
TEX...
DARLING!



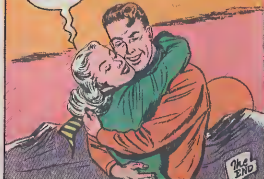
DIANA... YOU! I'VE SEEN YOUR FACE
BEFORE ME EVERY MINUTE, BUT WHY... WHY
HAVE YOU COME TO TORTURE ME?

TEX, I-- I DON'T CARE IF I
NEVER WRITE ANOTHER LINE
IN MY LIFE! I'VE BEEN A FOOL,
BUT NOW I REALIZE WHICH
WAY HAPPINESS LIES FOR
BOTH OF US! AND IF
YOU DON'T MARRY ME,
I'LL...



WITHIN HIS COMFORTING ARMS, I FOUND THE
ANSWER! THERE'D BE NO MORE GRIEF AND
DOUBT... BECAUSE I'D FOUND MY ROMEO
OF THE RANCH... IN REAL LIFE!

OH, TEX...
TEX...



THE
END

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Three Piece
WRITING
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CASE

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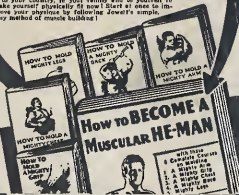
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